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CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL-CONTROL~~COUNTRY AustriaREPORT NO. 25X1ATOPIC State Undersecretary TARDINI Commenting on the Situation of
the Church in the People's Democracies

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EVALUATION

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REMARKS

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1. State Undersecretary TARDINI expressed his concern over the development of the situation of the church in the people's democracies, particularly Czechoslovakia and Poland. there can be no doubt that the governments of the people's democracies are firmly resolved either to destroy the church or make her a tool of the state. It is to be assumed for certain that the Catholic bishops will not yield to the pressure by the state. If, however, the state incarcerated or deported the bishops, as was done in the SU, the Catholic people would be deprived of its leadership and the priests would lose the backing by the authority of the church. Under such circumstances some priests would certainly yield to state pressure and this would unavoidably disorganize the Catholic people.

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2. on this view that, contrary to TARDINI's pessimism, MONTINI, the Second State Undersecretary, holds far more optimistic views. MONTINI, believes that the resistance of the Catholic people can by no means be overcome and that there would always be priests to direct this resistance, either legally or illegally. The Catholic Church must not be confused with the Orthodox Church which had always been an organ of the state. It is not the first time that the Catholic Church was forced to measure swords with an anti-Christian power, and such circumstances invariably proved that the Catholic people rose to the occasion, even without leadership.

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